

# Barbecues, bowls for villagers

By Ashleigh Williamson

Congupna retiree Noella Down is already thinking of lawn bowls and summer barbecues before the first residents move into a new lifestyle village in May.

A survey for Lifestyle Communities revealed 42.3 per cent of Victorians aged over 50 said regular social involvement was a key retirement concern.

Lifestyle Communities is building a \$45 million village on Channel Rd.

Mrs Down, 65, said the social activities of the Shepparton village would be import-

ant after living independently since her husband Ross died nine years ago.

"We're all moving there for one reason — to form friendships, keep busy and feel safe," she said.

"I've talked with other people about having barbecues and how everyone would bring a salad and whatever meat we wanted.

"I feel like I've known these people for years and we're not even living together yet."

The finished village will feature a bowling green, tennis court, indoor pool, spa and gymnasium within a private clubhouse.

"I've never played lawn bowls, but I'm looking forward to learning," Mrs Down said.

"I enjoy walking and we will be that close to the tracks along the Broken River."

Mrs Down said she would feel safe living in the village.

"I don't worry about security at the moment, but it will be an issue as I get older," she said.

"I wanted to move into the village before my family had to decide for me."

The Newspoll survey, which was held in August, asked 534 Victorian seniors about their attitudes towards their financial security, health, safety,

social and leisure time.

The survey statistics have revealed:

- 68 per cent of participants were concerned about their health;

- 61.4 per cent of full-time, 48.1 per cent of part-time and 47.1 per cent of non workers were worried about financial security;

- 59 per cent were worried about maintaining their independence as they aged;

- 54.7 per cent of women and 45.5 per cent of men were worried about their financial independence; and

- 52.5 per cent said staying active was a high priority.